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(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): **TOYOTA JIDOSHA KABUSHIKI KAISHA** [JP/JP]; 1, Toyota-cho, Toyota-shi, Aichi 4718571 (JP).

(72) Inventors; and

(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): **NAKAGAWA, Norihisa** [JP/JP]; c/o TOYOTA JIDOSHA KABUSHIKI

KAISHA, 1, Toyota-cho, Toyota-shi, Aichi 4718571 (JP).
AKIYOSHI, Asuka [JP/JP]; c/o TOYOTA JIDOSHA KABUSHIKI KAISHA, 1, Toyota-cho, Toyota-shi, Aichi 4718571 (JP).

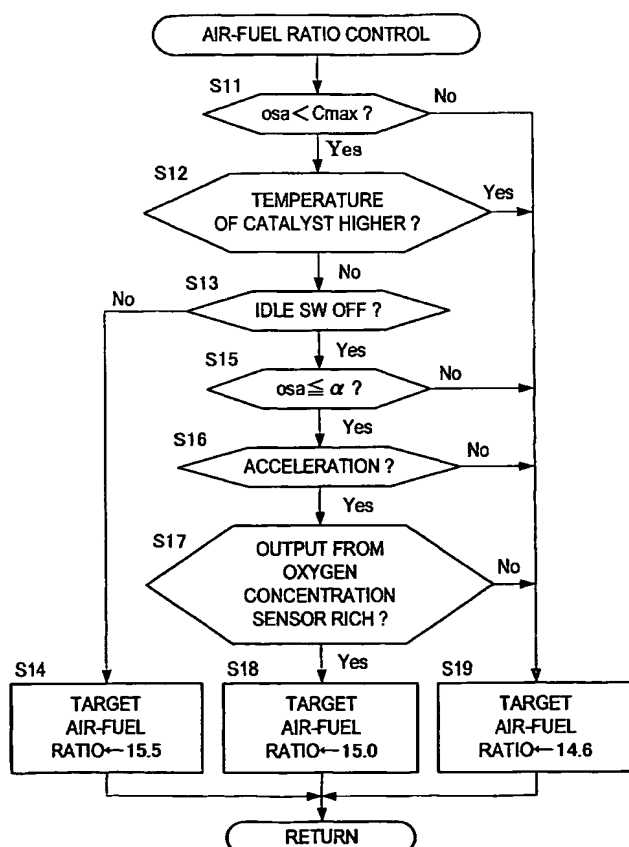
(74) Agents: **YAMAMOTO, Koji** et al.; c/o TOKYO CENTRAL PATENT FIRM, 4th Floor, Oak Building Kyobashi, 16-10, Kyobashi 1-chome, Chuou-ku, Tokyo 1040031 (JP).

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(54) Title: **AIR-FUEL RATIO CONTROL APPARATUS OF INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE**



(57) Abstract: An air-fuel ratio control apparatus of an internal combustion engine includes first and second catalysts 10 and 12, first air-fuel ratio acquiring means 8 provided upstream of the first catalyst, for acquiring an air-fuel ratio of exhaust gas; second air-fuel ratio acquiring means 11 for acquiring an air-fuel ratio of the exhaust gas flowing into the second catalyst, and air-fuel ratio controlling means 13 for controlling an air-fuel ratio according to the air-fuel ratios acquired by the first and second air-fuel ratio acquiring means, and the air-fuel ratio controlling means is provided with lean control means 13 for controlling an air-fuel ratio until the second catalyst becomes lean after completion of a fuel quantity increasing operation of the engine, and intermediate lean control means 13 for performing control to change the air-fuel ratio to a lean air-fuel ratio within the range enough to make the first catalyst lean and not enough to make the second catalyst lean, between the fuel quantity increasing operation and the air-fuel ratio control by the lean control means.



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